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THE WAR. LATEST TELEGRAMS.

(Reuter's Service to the China Mail.)

THE DEPORTATIONS FROM BELGIUM.

PROTEST FROM THE UNITED STATES.

"CONTRARY TO ALL PRECE- DENTS AND HUMANE PRINCIPLES."

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9.

The State Department has published a Note which it cabled to Germany on November 19th protesting against the deportation of civilians from Belgium. It says:

"The United States has learned with the greatest concern and regret of the policy to deport from Belgium civilians for the purpose of forced labour in Germany."

It is constrained to protest in a friendly spirit but most solemnly against an action contravening all precedents and humane principles and the international practice which has been accepted and followed by the civilized nations in the treatment of non-combatants.

The United States is convinced that the policy is fatal to Belgian relief work—a result which will be generally deplored—and that it will seriously embarrass the German Government.

AMERICA AND THE SUBMARINE PIRACY.

A NEW NOTE TO GERMANY EXPECTED.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9.

The probability is being discussed of a new Note to Germany as the result of recent submarine operations.

It is learned that the United States has enquired of Great Britain the status of the steamer *Arctia*, which was recently sunk by torpedo in the Mediterranean.

MORE NEUTRAL STEAMERS SUNK.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

The *Maier, Nervion and Stetten* (Norwegian), the *Kilise* (Belgian), the *Gerard and Lucerne* (Spanish), and the *Epina* (Greek), have been sunk.

It is believed that the *Caledonia* has also been sunk.

[There are at least seven British ships named "Caledonia," one German, one Danish and one Dutch. The two best known British ships of that name are a P. & O. liner of 7,572 tons built in 1894, and an Anchor liner of 9,223 tons built in 1904.]

THE SILVER MARKET.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

Messrs Montagu & Co's report states: The steadiness in price is significant. The tendency upward, despite a fall in China exchanges. Until the stock at Shanghai has been replenished from the interior, sales on account of China are most doubtful. The favourable views of the market taken by the Indian Bazaar are doubtless due to the fall during the week of 219 lakhs in the Indian Treasury holdings.

THE FIGHTING IN RUMANIA.

RUSSIANS DRIVE ENEMY FROM TWO HEIGHTS.

500 PRISONERS CAPTURED.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

A Russian communiqué states: The Russians captured 500 prisoners, 6 machine-guns and 9 cannon in an engagement west and south of Velleputu on the Rumanian front where the enemy were dislodged from two heights.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

BIG GERMAN MOVEMENTS IN BELGIUM.

FRESH ACTIVITY EXPECTED.

AMSTERDAM, Dec. 9.

There are big movements of German troops in Belgium.

It is believed that this presages fresh activity.

NEW YEAR CARD FOR INDIAN SOLDIERS.

A GIFT OF SIRDAR DALJIT SINGH.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

Sirdar Daljit Singh, who is leaving for India to-day on a short visit, has arranged that every Indian soldier in the field shall receive a New Year Card with a reproduction of a portrait of the King-Emperor in his Coronation robes, a facsimile of His Majesty's signature, and a loyal poem composed by the Sirdar himself printed in Hindi, Urdu or Gurmukhi, according to the language of the recipient.

THE ITALIAN FRONT.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

An Italian official announcement states that there is violent artillery activity in the Adige Valley and that the Italians dispersed a long enemy transport column.

LOSS OF A FRENCH BATTLESHIP.

PARIS, Dec. 7.

It is officially announced that the French battleship *Suffren*, left on the 24th ult. for Lorient and has not arrived.

It is feared that she is a total loss.

[Lorient is a fortified seaport and naval arsenal at Morbihan, France, at the confluence of Scorff and Blavet.

The "Suffren" was a battleship of 19,427 tons, built in 1906. Her complement is given as 615.]

HER FATE A MYSTERY.

LACER.

The French battleship *Suffren* was sent from Gibraltar. She carried a crew of 1,100. Her fate is a mystery, she was possibly sunk by a mine.

FORMING THE CABINET.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S PLANS AND DIFFICULTIES.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

It is understood that Mr. Lloyd George is aiming at a Cabinet of 12, composed of 5 Unionists, 5 Liberals and 2 Labourites. One Labour member of the Cabinet will, presumably, be a member of the War Council and three other Labourites will be in the Ministry.

Mr. Lloyd George's principal difficulty at present is the securing of adequate Liberal representation owing to the refusal of nearly all the Liberal ex-Ministers to serve.

At a meeting of the Liberal War Committee, attended by thirty members, it was resolved to actively support Mr. Lloyd George.

A LIBERAL PARTY MEETING CONVENED.

Mr. Asquith presides at a meeting of the Liberal party to-morrow.

"INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS."

LONDON, Dec. 9.

A Privy Council meeting convened for to-day has been cancelled.

It is understood that this is owing to insufficient progress having been made with the construction of a Cabinet.

CABINET PROBLEMS IN FRANCE.

SITUATION COMPARED WITH THE BRITISH.

PARIS, Dec. 9.

Important developments are expected as the result of a secret meeting of the French Chamber. It is the sole topic of the Deputies.

The Parliamentary situation is compared with the British. It is not known whether M. Briand will resign, but it is declared that the solution must conform with the precise indications in the Chamber's vote. The difficulties of M. Briand's task are recognised and it is regarded as natural that he should be given time to reach a satisfactory settlement.

The Council of Ministers on Friday discussed the measures necessary to carry out the Chamber's views.

GERMANS AND THE "TANKS."

The following article, giving the German view of the British "Tanks," is issued by the Press Bureau:

In public the Germans have spoken with two voices about the British "Tanks." With one they say that the Tanks are so useful to us that it is not fair of us to use them. That was the official voice, just after the Tanks first came into action. They were called "as cruel as effective" and it was urged that they are ought to be treated as inhuman. With its second voice, the loss official voice, which it uses through the megaphone of the German press, the German General Staff said that the Tanks were a failure and need not be minded. What the German commands, really think about the Tanks may be gathered from a battalion order recently issued in the sector south of the Aisne, "in view of the danger of attacks by the English Tanks." It gives detailed directions for defensive measures, to be taken before half-past seven the next morning. All roads leading from British to German positions, and not actually used for the passage of German artillery and transport, are to be "obstructed so as to render them impassable." They are also to be "cut for a width of 4 to 6 metres (13 to 20 feet) and to a depth of 1 1/2 to 2 metres (5 to 6 feet), a narrow way being left for the passage of infantry and material."

EARLIER TELEGRAMS.

THE RE-CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRITISH CABINET.

MR. ASQUITH'S OUTSIDE SUPPORT.

LONDON, Dec. 7.

Mr. Asquith said there had been a carefully-engineered campaign against Lord Gray and himself but he acquitted Mr. Lloyd George, or any member of the Government, of complicity therein. He received Mr. Lloyd George's proposal for a smaller War Council on December 1st and replied the same day that the Prime Minister must preside over such a body. Mr. Lloyd George did not agree and on the 3rd inst. the Unionist Ministers intimated that unless Mr. Asquith resigned they would resign. He (Mr. Asquith) appealed to Mr. Bonar Law to remain and he wrote to Mr. Lloyd George on the 4th that he was prepared to remain in the Cabinet as a spectator and outlined certain proposals, which Mr. Lloyd George accepted, subject to the character of the personnel of the War Council. He (Mr. Asquith) consulted a friend who felt that the differences regarding the Premier presiding over the War Council and the personnel of the Council were irreconcilable, so he resigned.

Mr. Asquith declined to join the new Government because he felt he would be a source of weakness. The attacks on him would continue and it would be better that he gave independent support from outside.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S REPLY TO A CRITICISM.

Mr. Lloyd George, in reply to a criticism in the House of Commons recently of an interview by him with an American correspondent, said:

My declaration was this—that we should tolerate no interference until Prussian military despotism is broken beyond repair. What is the declaration of the Prime Minister? We shall not make peace until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed. I say "broken beyond repair"; the Prime Minister says, "It must be wholly destroyed." What is the difference? (Cheers.) I simply elaborated in my own language the declaration which had been made by the Prime Minister, not once or twice, or three times, but repeatedly, and by the French Prime Minister a few weeks before in the great speech which he delivered in the French Chamber, and I can very well leave it with the brilliant oration which the Prime Minister delivered to-day, which is a complete and authoritative answer to all those who have been trying to show that my statement was a declaration made without consulting my colleagues and speaking for myself alone. It is a pure invention, and I cannot believe that any of my colleagues would tell correspondents what had been said at a Cabinet meeting.

Now I come to the language. It was not a speech; it was not a letter; it was an interview. An interview is a public report of a private conversation. (Laughter.) Well, I do not know how my hon. friend speaks in private. Surely he does not address his friends in private as he speaks in an assembly; if he does, God help his friends. (Laughter.) So much for language. Now I come to the third point, which I think is the real objection of my hon. friend. It is not that the policy is wrong; the policy is that of the Prime Minister, which has been repeated over and over again. I almost repeated the very words which he used. The policy has been proclaimed time after time. I proclaimed no new policy. Intervention now would be a triumph for Germany—a military triumph, a war triumph. Intervention would be for us a military disaster. Has the Secretary for War no right to express an opinion on what would be a military disaster? That is what I did, and I do not wish to draw a single syllable. (Cheers.) It was essential. I could tell the hon. member how timely it was. It was not merely the expression of my own opinion, but the expression of the opinion of the Cabinet, of the War Committee, and of our military advisers. It was the opinion of every Ally. (Cheers.)

THE REIGN OF TERROR IN ATHENS.

DASTARDLY OUTRAGE ON THE MAYOR.

LONDON, Dec. 8.

Reuter learns the details of a dastardly attack made at Athens on the Mayor, M. Benuchi, a septuagenarian, and a member of the Greek Colony at Alexandria.

His house was subjected to a fusillade from the residence of Prince Ypsilanti, Master of the King's Horse, and from the street. Princess Ypsilanti, who is a Hungarian, personally encouraged the soldiers, who broke into the house, seized the Mayor, spat upon him, bayoneted him, struck him with the butt-ends of their rifles, and partly tore out his beard.

The Mayor, covered with blood, was dragged into the street while Princess Ypsilanti was seen at the window clapping her hands.

M. Benuchi was taken for examination and eventually sent home, where he now lies, with his house wrecked and looted.

When the Vanezelist General Corakas, with three other prisoners, including M. Maroudis, ex-Chief of Police, were removed from the Parliament House, blood was streaming from the head and face of General Corakas, whose eyes were swollen and bruised from blows he had received during his arrest, and during the magisterial examination. While General Corakas was being taken past the principal restaurant in Athens, a man, amid the applause of the soldiers, threw filth in his face. This was the signal for the mob to break through the cordon of soldiers and maltreat General Corakas, whom the soldiers had to take back to the Parliament House to prevent him being killed.

THE SITUATION MOST ACUTE.

ATHENS, Dec. 7.

The situation is most acute. The blockade has begun. Russian, Serb and Italian Nationals have left. The Government has informed the Entente that the military movements which were the subject of the demands have ceased. Many Athenians are changing their residences, fearing a bombardment.

THE MACEDONIAN FRONT.

HARD FIGHTING ON SERBIAN FRONT.

ALL ATTACKS REPULSED; HEAVY ENEMY LOSSES.

LONDON, Dec. 7.

A Serbian communiqué states that there is hard fighting along the whole front. The enemy, reinforced, made several attempts to recapture some positions north of Grunista, but all attacks were repulsed with heavy enemy losses.

Fighting continues.

PARIS, Dec. 7.

A French communiqué says: The Serbians completely repulsed three violent counter-attacks by German and Bulgarian in the region of Staravina.

Bad weather is preventing operations.

MESOPOTAMIA.

BRITISH DROP BOMBS ON TURKISH CAMPS.

LONDON, Dec. 9.

An official message from Mesopotamia says six British aeroplanes, in retaliation for hostile bombings, dropped half a ton of explosives on Turkish camps and did considerable damage.

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